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The  
Hydrogen  
Bomb

# The Hydrogen Bomb:

*The Men  
The Menace  
The Mechanism*

**JAMES SHEPLEY  
and CLAY BLAIR, Jr.**

Behind the scenes in the Atomic Energy Commission, the  
National Security Council, the White House itself, while some  
of the most important decisions in  
American history were being made.

McKay

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## *The Hydrogen Bomb: The Men, the Menace, the Mechanism*

By JAMES SHEPLEY,  
Head of the Washington Bureau of  
*Time and Life*

and CLAY BLAIR, JR.,  
of the same bureau, and author of  
*The Atomic Submarine and Admiral Rickover*

Both the authors are newsmen, not politicians or public relations men. They take the reader behind the scenes of the Atomic Energy Commission, the National Security Council, the White House, while some of the most fateful decisions in American history were being made. Now the public can pass judgment on the men who made the decisions, their sincerity and their fitness for handling the most dangerous secrets of all time. . . . Everything about this story is gigantic—the struggles it relates, the drama it unfolds, and above all, its implications for our national survival.

Back in 1949, Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer led a highly influential group of U. S. scientists in vigorously opposing the construction, by the United States, of a hydrogen bomb; Russia had just proved that she had the atomic bomb by exploding one. Lewis Strauss and Dr. Edward Teller, backed by a few scientists and the belief that it was imperative for us to keep ahead in the

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grim race for deadly weapons, urged the development of the hydrogen bomb. The ensuing struggle reached out eventually to involve and influence almost every question of political, diplomatic, and military strategy that arose. Because of it, Harry Truman was threatened with impeachment; in part, it was responsible for the recent security investigations of Dr. Oppenheimer. It has created bitterness in government circles that will rankle for years. Above all, the struggle delayed the building of a hydrogen bomb in the U. S. While we bickered, the Soviet Union pushed ahead with the development of its own hydrogen bomb. In August, 1953, they exploded one. Hasty and desperate work on the part of U. S. scientists, led by the able and unrelenting Dr. Teller, and backed by Senator McMahon and the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy, redressed the balance in March, 1954.

A full assessment of the effects of this situation on the future and even the existence of this country and all mankind will be impossible for years to come. But here is the story, much of it hitherto untold, the rest of it available only in scattered fragments of testimony before committees, in interviews, etc. The background, the events themselves, the people involved—all are seen here in their proper context of recent history.

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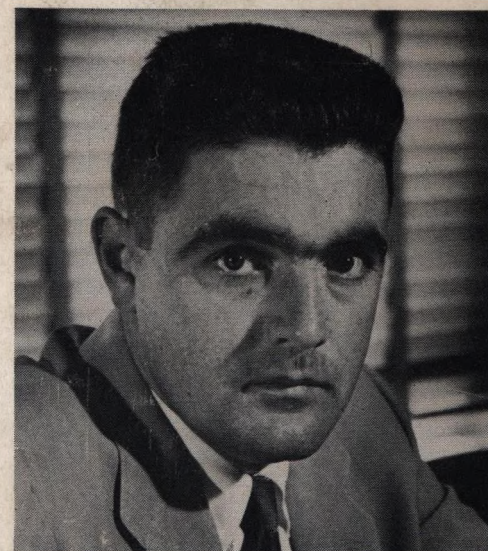
## About the Authors



Walter Bennett

General Marshall's official report of World War II, and served as attaché to General Marshall in his role as presidential envoy to China in 1946. He was *Time's* foreign-policy correspondent in Washington from 1946 to 1948. He has been chief of the Washington Bureau of *Time Incorporated* since 1948.

CLAY BLAIR, JR., was born in Lexington, Virginia, in May, 1925, and was educated in public schools throughout the South. In 1943, he volunteered for the Navy and spent twenty-two months in the Submarine Service. Serving on the U.S.S. *Guardfish*, he participated in two war patrols against the Japanese and was awarded the Submarine Combat insignia. After the war he attended Tulane and Columbia Universities. He joined *Time-Life* in 1949, and in 1950 was made a Pentagon correspondent for *Time*, specializing in atomic weapons and policy. He is the author of *The Atomic Submarine* and *Admiral Rickover*, which appeared in 1954. He lives in a Washington suburb with his wife, the former



Walter Bennett

Agnes Kemp Devereux, and their two children, Mary Louise, aged three, and Clay III, aged one and a half. His hobbies include reading, jazz piano playing, and water skiing.

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